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the British Prime Minister's visit to the People's Republic of China in September, when the principal subject of discussion was the future of the territory. Mrs Thatcher's visit proved controversial, and at least temporarily hardened British and Chinese attitudes over Britain's legal claims to the territory. The political tension, combined with the recession in trade and a collapse in stock exchange and property values, seriously eroded local confidence in the future of the territory. Though the British and Chinese governments have publicly taken pains to reassure Hong Kong citizens and investors, and have begun confidential preparatory talks, there is still considerable concern.

In advance of Mrs Thatcher's visit last September, CIIR published a *Comment, The Future of Hong Kong*, which drew attention to the absence of political representation in the territory and the fact that, as a result, the five million inhabitants of Hong Kong remain unable to contribute their point of view to the negotiations about Hong Kong's future. Both in relation to this issue, which naturally dominates public thinking at present, and in relation to the effective administration of Hong Kong's local affairs, the present arrangements appear to be both unjust and anachronistic.

In Hong Kong, the *Comment* has been reproduced in both English and Chinese and was covered in the local press. It seems likely that the political situation will continue to evolve rapidly. New local organisations, like the Hong Kong Observers and Meeting Point, are beginning to put forward ideas for reform which, if they were supported by the population, would eventually significantly influence the way in which the territory is administered by the Hong Kong Government, as well as the conduct of negotiations about its future.

In February 1983, CIIR helped to arrange a programme in Britain for Ms Trini Leung Wing Yue of the Asia Monitor Resource Center, who was visiting Europe to express the concern of community groups about environmental problems in Hong Kong.

East Timor

While the famine of 1979-81 is apparently no longer widely prevalent, and the Indonesian authorities continue to spend heavily on economic development programmes, reports from East Timor indicate that resistance to Indonesian occupation continues. The territory remains important within CIIR's Asia programme, particularly since one of the principal channels for the views of the population is the local Catholic Church. One of the most outspoken critics of Indonesian actions was the leader of the Roman Catholic community, Mgr Martinho da Costa Lopes, whose resignation in May 1983 was greeted with some dismay by East Timorese Catholics and their friends abroad.

Internationally, debate has continued to focus on the United Nations' General Assembly vote on East Timor, which has taken place every year since 1975, and which resulted in 1982 in a narrow majority against Indonesia. CIIR assisted the Parliamentary Human Rights Group to circulate background information on Timor to the governments of those states which had previously abstained or supported the Indonesian position. In September, CIIR helped to arrange meetings in London for Mr Manuel Tilman, Chairman of the all-party Portuguese Parliamentary Commission on East Timor. CIIR also acted as host at a meeting of European East Timor groups from Britain, Holland and France, and continued to supply information to concerned Catholic and other development agencies in Europe and the United Kingdom.

CIIR was consulted by the Portuguese government in connection with Portugal's diplomatic initiative to resolve the issue. In November 1982, as the former
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November 1982, as the former colonial power, Portugal sponsored the General Assembly Resolution on East Timor. This called upon the Secretary General of the United Nations to 'initiate consultation . . . with a view to . . . achieving a comprehensive settlement' and reasserted Portugal's commitment to the right of the people of East Timor to self-determination.

Portugal is recognised by the United Nations to be the Administering Power in East Timor. The Portuguese initiative appears to be the only one which at present offers some slight hope of eventually achieving a peaceful negotiated settlement of the problem. Most European countries, including Britain, are friendly with both the Portuguese and Indonesian governments; they also support the principles which are defended in United Nations resolutions on the question, notably the principle of self-determination and the illegality of Indonesia's occupation by force of East Timor in 1975.

A resolution rather more critical of Indonesia was also passed by the United Nations' Commission on Human Rights in Geneva in February 1983.

In April 1982, after a leader in *The Times* had taken up the argument of CIIR's *Comment* on East Timor, CIIR was visited by a representative from the Indonesian Embassy, who invited CIIR to visit East Timor. CIIR has accepted, subject to guarantees that a CIIR group would have freedom of movement and be permitted to speak freely to local people and specifically the local church. In October 1982, a CIIR staff member visited Indonesia and met the Archbishop of Jakarta, representatives of the Indonesian church, embassy officials and Mr Tjan of the Institute for Strategic and International Studies. During this visit, the prospects for a visit to East Timor were discussed. CIIR is still waiting to hear whether the offer made by the Indonesian Embassy will be confirmed.

Vietnam

Vietnam has remained the subject of acute international and strategic tension, and the domestic and foreign policies of its government have aroused international criticism both in the West and within the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), and also within Vietnam itself. At the same time, although the war which ended in 1975 caused intense suffering and although living standards are among the lowest in the world, Vietnam's people have been deprived of development and humanitarian aid by the West — a policy which is morally difficult to defend. At the suggestion of several church and other voluntary agencies in the United Kingdom and other European countries, CIIR agreed in 1981 to prepare a document on Vietnam. Although it has proved difficult to achieve consensus on what is a very sentitive and difficult issue, it is nevertheless hoped to produce a publication during 1983.

DEVELOPMENT DESK

In November 1982 CIIR carried out its long-held intention and appointed a staff member to reactivate its Development desk. Unlike CIIR's other education sections, the Development desk does not have a specifically regional focus, but concentrates on international and global issues affecting Third World development in general and on relations between the rich and poor countries of the world. A particular theme is the aid and co-operation arrangements between the developed and developing nations, and the economic and commercial relations which bind the rich and poor countries of the world in a common destiny.

The background of CIIR's current development work is the drastic